

Sisters' S. C. E.

AN ADDRESS ON EASTER DAY.

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If we could look back eighteen hundred and sixty-five years and five days to Jerusalem we would see 2,700,000 Jews attending the Passover services. No doubt many were restless during the night, and filled with deep sorrow, especially the devoted women, for the daughters of Jerusalem bewailed and lamented him on Friday before as he bore his cross, and as he endured with God like patience the three hours of raging human passion. These were succeeded by three hours of miraculous darkness hushing mortal hatred into silence and perhaps contributing to the penitence of the revilers at his side. This thick darkness was not dispelled till Jesus cried with a loud voice, the veil of the temple rent in twain from top to bottom; the earth quaked, the rocks throughout Judea split and hurled asunder; the graves of the saints opened for them to come forth. With this picture hanging fresh on the walls of the memory of about 3,000,000 persons, is it not reasonable to suppose the whole city was restless, since Christ said he would rise the third day.

Notwithstanding these awe inspiring phenomena women lingered at the cross when the strongest apostles fled. In the distance—afar off—they watched Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus where they lay the Lord. Disappointed and grief stricken they went to their homes in different parts of the city. Christ was buried in a garden outside the walls of Jerusalem. This was not a garden of these latitudes. Our late frosts of Spring and our early frosts of Autumn are so near each other that we have only a few months of flowers. Nearly all of the flowers we see to-day had to be nursed, coaxed, petted and put under shelter or they would not have bloomed at all. At this season and throughout most of the year the holy land is all ablaze with floral opulence. In studying the flora of that country we found all the royal families of flowers there, some that we supposed indigenous to the far north, and others indigenous to the far south—the hyacinth and geranium, daisy and crocus, tulip and water lily, sweet marguerite and mignonette—about sixteen hundred different kinds of flowers. Among the trees are the tamarisks of the tropics, the oaks of icy climes, olive and walnut, ivy and elder, pine and sycamore. With these floral and botanical jewels the wild growth of the uncultivated field, what must a garden be in Palestine. In such a garden our blessed Lord slept after, on the soldiers spear, the last drop of blood

had coagulated, and now let us floralize and tree shade our cemeteries.

According to Bible language, "Jesus had lain in the grave a part of each of three days,—Friday after noon, Saturday all day, and part of Sunday, beginning at sunset Saturday night. He had repeatedly foretold that he should rise on the third day or after three days. It was the custom of the Jews to count the parts of each day as a whole day. We see it illustrated in the chronology of the kings, by the way they counted the years of a reign. It is so in the Old Testament, in the Talmud, in Josephus, and in the Assyrian tablets, days were counted in the same way." "In the stories of the different evangelists there are a number of variations and sometimes almost slight contradictions. But all can be put together in one connected story, as we do in this account. However we must remember that this is always true of independent histories of an event seen by different observers from different standpoints, and is a proof of the reliability of the story. If all had exactly agreed, it would be proof of collusion. Even if there were contradictions, which there are not, they would not discredit the fact. Thus there was a real battle at Waterloo," but Chadwick says, "When the generals of Henry the Fourth strove to tell him what passed after he was wounded at Aumale, no two of them agreed in the course of events which gave them victory. Two armies beheld the battle of Waterloo, but who can tell when it began? At ten o'clock, said the Duke of Wellington. At half-past eleven, said General Alava, who rode by his side. At twelve, according to Napoleon and Dronet; and at one, according to Ney."

Very early—while it was yet dark (John)—on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, Salome, Joanna and other women left their homes in different parts of the city, with spices and ointments to embalm the crucified Christ. On their way there was a great earthquake, and sixty armed Roman soldiers became as dead men. The stone was rolled away, (here the speaker turned and rolled a marble slab from the opening of a miniature sepulchre, constructed by the ladies and decorated with flowers) the seal broken, not to allow Jesus to come forth, but to show the resurrection was an act of divine power. The soldiers soon fled, for they seem not to have been there when the friends of Jesus came. Angels have been employed in communicating important tidings to men. They often appeared to the patriarchs; conveyed intelligence to the prophets; announced the birth of the Savior; directed his escape into Egypt; ministered to him in the des-

ert; and doubtless watched with intense interest the events of the cross; and now were the first to gladden the hearts of the devoted women, the friends of Jesus, by the cheering tidings: He is not here; for he is risen; come see the place where the Lord lay.

The resurrection is a mystery. Paul says it is a mystery. That is just why I believe it. If God could do only what I can understand he would be a very insignificant God. But we may have a better idea of it when we study the phonograph and hear it unroll some voice that talked into it years ago just before the death of our friend. We touch the button and then comes forth the very tones of the departed. If man through his ingenuity can return the voice of the dead, cannot God return the voice of the departed? And if he can return the voice why not the whole body?

Some one says, will it be the same body that in the last day shall be reanimated? Yes, but infinitely improved. Medical science teaches that our bodies change every seven years, and yet in one sense it is the same body. On the small finger of my right hand, and on the index finger of my left hand each is a scar. I made them in my early childhood when, in disobedience to my mother, I played with a sharp jack knife. Since then my body has changed two or three times, but these scars prove it is the same body. Our identity is never lost. If God can and sometimes does rebuild a man five, seven, nine, ten times in this world, is it mysterious that he can rebuild him once more at the resurrection? God can make each one of us a perfect being in the resurrection. As the lady sang, "Not doubting or forsaken only tired, not doubting nor forsaken, only tired." I thought the time is coming when we will come up rested. The most of us will lay down at the last very tired. How often have you heard your friend say, I am so tired. The fact is, this is a tired world. There is not one in this audience ignorant of the sensation of fatigue. Your brain is tired, your back is tired, your foot is tired, your nerves are tired. Work, bereavement or sickness has put heavy weights on you. No rest here. The majority who went out of this world, went out tired. The poorest place I know to rest is in this world. The resurrection of Christ assures us of eternal rest, "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Observe now, that women were last at the cross and first at the sepulchre, and that Christ appeared to woman first, Mary Magdalene out of whom he cast seven demons, so his special message to Peter